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13 Sep 01

Express-News: Military

S.A. takes on medical role

By Cindy Tumiel and Sig Christenson

Express-News Staff Writers

Web Posted : 09/13/2001

San Antonio's medical community rallied Wednesday to prepare for the possibility of patient transfers, while military medical teams began traveling to the Northeast to support recovery efforts amid the World Trade Center rubble.

More than 110 people from the 59th Medical Wing at Wilford Hall Medical Center have deployed so far to New Jersey's Fort Dix, adjacent to McGuire AFB.

On Wednesday, more than 650 additional staff were ready to deploy, but they were put on standby status, as airspace around McGuire was congested.

Included in that group are 400 medical personnel who help run a 25-bed surgical unit. It was not immediately clear whether the Wilford Hall personnel would set up in New Jersey or travel to the destruction site.

Locally, hospitals across the city also shuffled their resources to help make room for the chance that patients injured in the attacks would be transferred here.

A few pregnant women had to make abrupt changes in their plans when long security waits outside Wilford Hall forced them to go to other area hospitals to give birth.

Both Methodist Healthcare System and the Baptist system said they took care of several panicky patients who had planned to give birth at Wilford Hall but were advised to go elsewhere as labor pains set in.

"I totally understand their security," said new mom Tara Lynn Lytle, who had just given birth to Emily Pearl Lytle at Methodist Hospital. "I'm not upset. I'm just glad it turned out so well."

As the day began, traffic was heavy at Wilford Hall, where Security Forces troops armed with loaded M-16 rifles were searching cars before

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they were allowed to enter.

When Lytle called at noon to say she was going into labor, the nurses advised her to go to Methodist instead.

"I was kind of upset because of the simple fact that I knew where (Wilford Hall) was, and I knew I didn't have much time," Lytle said.

She got directions and made it to Methodist with husband Ashley, an Army specialist, with little time to spare. Emily Pearl was born at 3:17 p.m.

The small drama was one of several ripples felt by San Antonio health care facilities since Tuesday's terrorist attacks.

Both Wilford Hall and Brooke Army Medical Center stepped up security and closed emergency rooms to civilians after the strikes to reserve bed space for possible patient transfers.

Federal officials also activated the National Disaster Medical System (NDMS), which required area hospitals to be ready to possibly handle trauma victims from the disaster.

A six-man mortuary affairs team from San Antonio also was dispatched Wednesday to Dover AFB in Delaware. The San Antonio Air Force Services Agency team will assist in handling the remains of the dead from Tuesday's attack on the Pentagon.

Since the two local military hospitals closed their emergency rooms to civilians, the responsibility for that care fell to University Hospital, the region's only other major trauma center.

In turn, University began diverting ambulances with non-emergency patients to other hospitals, including the Methodist Healthcare Systems, the Baptist Medical Center and Christus Santa Rosa. University also

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Express-News: Military

Gridlock hits Lackland AFB

By Sharon K. Hughes
San Antonio Express-News

Web Posted : 09/13/2001

Students who arrived by the last period were counted present at Rayburn Middle School on Wednesday.

Attendance normally is taken in second period, but Rayburn postponed its tally because traffic leading into nearby Lackland AFB stranded teachers and school buses in bumper-to-bumper traffic for much of the morning.

"It's been an experience," said Principal Jesus Marquez, who is starting his first year at the school. One bus arrived at the school at about 12:30 p.m., just in time for lunch, he added.

"At 11:45 (a.m.) there were at least three buses in line," Marquez said.

At Lackland City Elementary School, which is located across the street from the base, Principal Jerry Allen said the base has tied up traffic before, but Wednesday was the worst he'd seen in 15 years.

"Nothing ever like today, though," Allen said. "We've had a few dignitaries here where they play soldier, but today they weren't playing."

The elementary school didn't have quite the day that Rayburn had, Allen said. School starts earlier and all the children walk, he said.

Northside School District's third school near Lackland, Valley Hi Elementary School, didn't have as many traffic problems because it's outside Loop 410, spokesman Pascual Gonzalez said.

Buses will take an alternate route today, and the district sent out memos giving parents and teachers directions to avoid some of the traffic.

In Lackland School District, teachers, parents and students waited up to five hours to get to the school as armed guards patrolled the entrances and security forces checked identifications, Superintendent David Splitek said.

Some housing is across Loop 410 in the Lackland Annex. The school is on

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the main base.

Parents helped other district staff members watch classrooms.

At the Fort Sam Houston and Randolph Field districts, officials reported regular school days, although increased security caused some slight delays.

"Since our students live on the installation, getting them onto campus was not a problem," Fort Sam Houston Associate Superintendent Gail Siller said.

At Rayburn, the delays helped keep the attacks in New York City and Washington fresh in children's minds.

In Mike Davila's half-empty, first-period honors class, students didn't want to talk about anything else.

"I just dismissed the lesson entirely," Davila said. In the other classes, Davila said the day's news took up only the first few minutes of class.

"I just left it up to them," he said.

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KAREN L. SHAW//STAFF

Navy Lt. j.g. Connie Ross walks Wednesday toward Lackland AFB with her son Matthew, 17 months, after parking her car. 'Matthew got tired of waiting,' Ross said. 'He's hungry.'

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OUR TURN

Fed officials begin anti-terrorism work

President Bush and Congress set the proper tone on the day after the worst terrorist attack in U.S. history. They went back to business.

But it was "not business as usual," Bush noted.

The nation has plenty to do. The shock may have worn off, but the horrible aftermath remains.

New York City and the Pentagon are still digging out of the rubble created by the maniacal terrorists who hijacked commercial airliners and flew them into the World Trade Center towers and the nation's military nerve center.

The United States is preparing to respond to the attacks, and the nation also must take action to cope with the more dangerous world in which we now live.

Federal investigators continued a concentrated effort to track down the perpetrators of Tuesday's attacks on democracy.

Bush has vowed to punish the culprits when they are identified, and officials are taking time to do the job properly.

"We have to build a case first," Secretary of State Colin Powell said on a morning television show.

A well-prepared case against the terrorists, believed to be aligned with Osama bin Laden, is needed to ensure that the right people — all of the right people — are targeted for response.

And a thorough investigation will help the United States muster international support for the actions it must take.

The nation must respond to this week's attacks and prepare for a long war against terrorism.

Bush and other administration officials met with members of Congress as lawmakers demonstrated bipartisan unity in response to the attack on America.

House Speaker Dennis Hastert, a Republican, and Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle, a Democrat, said lawmakers from both parties stand shoulder to shoulder with each other in support of the president in his response to the terrorist attacks.

Congress should and will quickly provide emergency funding to help pay the cost of cleaning up the terrorists' destruction and rebuilding the Pentagon.

In the coming weeks, Congress also must consider funding the aggressive long-term war on terrorism that is obviously necessary. The CIA and other intelligence operations need more resources, and Congress should consider reducing some of the CIA's operational restrictions.

As the investigation of Tuesday's incidents progresses toward the work of eliminating the terrorist network responsible for the barbaric attack, the administration and Congress will serve the nation best by continuing the cooperative, unified approach.



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FOCUS: ATTACK ON AMERICA

Nation put to test

The headline on the Express-News extra edition Tuesday, "A new day of infamy," was an apt description of the terrorist attack on our country.

I fear, however, that the death toll will far exceed Pearl Harbor.

This treacherous and horrendous act of war will test the mettle of President Bush and our other national leaders. The American people will demand a settlement of accounts, and the whole world will be watching.

Perhaps now politicians will awake to this fact: The one issue that transcends all others is our defense capability and national security.

— Gerald Saldana

History at its worst

It is sad to say we are all witnessing history at its absolute worst.

— Mary Alice Craig

Too comfortable

I am shocked at what has happened here in the United States. My prayers go out to all of the families of the victims of this tragedy. I believe we have become too comfortable with our freedoms and our belief that this could never happen to us. This makes it harder to comprehend.

I have no doubt that we, as Americans, will prevail, and we will punish whoever did this.

— C.K. Perales

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not doing the work of any god.

— Tina M. Musso

Unite for strong nation

While driving my children home from school Tuesday, I explained why all the American flags were flying at half-staff.

After a few minutes, my 7-year-old daughter, asked, "Mom, will the flags ever go up again?"

With tears in my eyes, I told her, "It might take awhile, but, yes, the flags will go up again."

America, let's put our petty differences aside and unite to give our children a nation that is strong and proud.

— Sharon Annestrand

politicians had committed them with a legitimate declaration of war. A declaration of war keeps soldiers focused on destruction of the enemy.

It is time for this country to declare war on Osama bin Laden, all terrorists and any country that gives them aid.

Consider this: If bin Laden owned a nuclear weapon, do you think he would have used it? If we don't declare a legitimate war and stop these terrorists, they will obtain a nuclear weapon and use it. The time to act is now.

— Gary D. Barnes

Words can't explain

When I was 3, my father roused me from a deep sleep so that I could witness one of America's finest hours.

As those incredible words were spoken, "One small step for man . . ." the United States landed a man on the moon, ushering in an exciting new age of international cooperation and exploration.

Now, as I sit before the TV with my newborn son in my arms, I struggle to find the words to explain to his 3-year-old brother what is happening when he asks, "Daddy, why are you crying?"

— Michael S. Yeates



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May God bless, forgive

No man, woman or child should have to witness the atrocities of racist human beings. Every man, woman and child should stand for the search and punishment of those responsible for the slaughter in New York and the disrespect of our free, noble and powerful country.

God bless America, and God forgive those responsible for these horrific acts.

— David Fernandez

And may the bullets fly

All I can say now is: I believe in God, but right now I believe in bullets even more!

— Ray Tarasoff

From evil comes good

Watching the concerted attack on U.S. soil by terrorists was overwhelming. As I watched two of the largest buildings on Earth crumble to the ground, I had to ask, why? Where is God in all of this?

These terrorist acts were not approved or devised by God but by evil men. They were carried out by fanatics who followed blindly.

However, God will use these acts to bring about something wonderful from the rest of the country. The massive loss of life was not God's will, but how we respond can be. America will come together.

Only a loving God can bring goodness from such evil. I am not talking about any one god. Separate gods and their divisive requirements are part of the problem. The people who perpetrated this assault may have done it in the name of God, but they were

Meet the enemy ...

What happened Tuesday morning is horrific but not unexpected. America is an open country, which makes it easy for terrorists to attack.



BIN LADEN

When the dust settles, America will know Osama bin Laden is behind all of this. Every American should know who he is, what resources he has and what he is capable of.

— Katherine E. Razdoroff

... then scare him

The American people are tired of terrorist attacks. Our government must let the world know that we are the strongest nation on the globe and we have the knowledge and the resources to counter any form of terrorism.

We cannot continue to be reactive while American lives are lost. We must be proactive. We should not fear what terrorists will do to us. They should fear what we will do to them.

— Randy Jones

Declare (legitimate) war

To some people, this may seem like an impractical approach to terrorism, but I will write my congressman and ask him to declare war.

We should do this for the same reason people marry. The ceremony ensures commitment and legitimacy to the children of that marriage.

This will not be the first time we have waged war on terrorists. Early in our nation's history, the Navy and Marines defeated the Barbary pirates who were terrorizing our ships. The Marines attacked Tripoli from the rear by crossing the desert.

They were victorious because their authority was unquestioned. Their

End the pity party

"America in agony"? I think not! I am very disappointed in Wednesday's headline. In fact, I'm a bit angered.

Yes, we mourn the loss of fellow Americans. We are sorrowful for the suffering caused by this outrageous attack. But are we in agony? No!

The perpetrators of this atrocity want America to suffer. They want to destroy our way of life, our economy and the capitalist demon. They want to cause panic, despair and agony. They try to kill the American spirit.

But America is much stronger than they can imagine. Americans are pulling together. Americans are helping each other. America is strong.

Our enemies must never be allowed to believe they can inflict a mortal wound on us by acts of terrorism. They must see we will never allow our country and our way of life to be diminished.

I implore you to end the pity party! Get rid of the gloom-and-doom headlines. Show the world how Americans are pulling together. Show our enemies that they cannot defeat the American spirit.

We are not in agony! We are America!

— K.D. White

Keep security tight

Japan found out what it's like to awaken the sleeping giant. Now, let us hope the United States soon brings to justice the persons or nations responsible for this calamity.

We must heighten security at all airports and along all our borders. No one must be allowed to have access to our airplanes or enter this country in any but a legal fashion.

While we pray for the victims and give thanks for survivors, all Americans must support our government's efforts to protect our nation.

— John McGoldrick

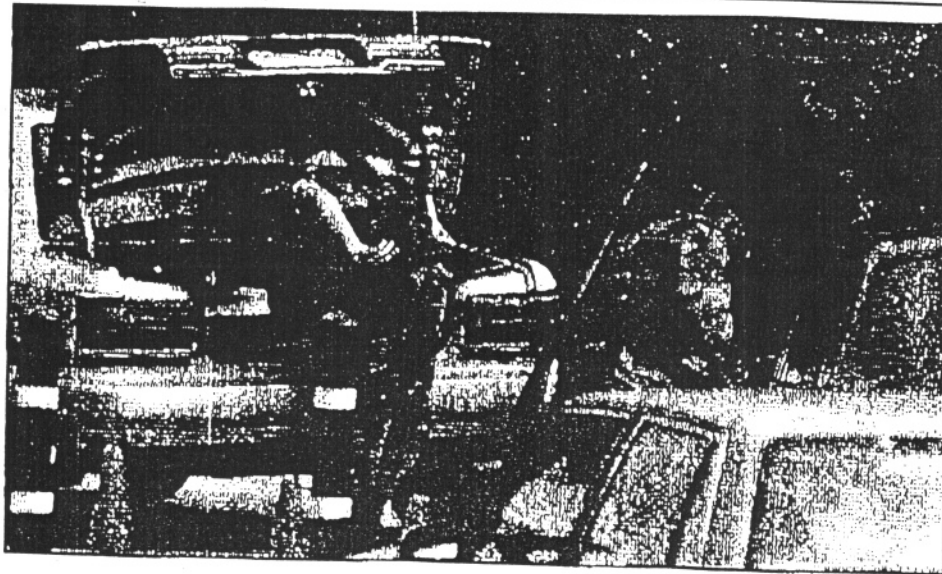
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Lloyd Gallman Staff

Traffic moves slowly into Maxwell-Gunter Air Force Base in Montgomery amid increased security for all military bases. Vehicles were checked closely Tuesday before being allowed on base.

State's military facilities under heightened security

By Ken Roedl
and Mike Sherman
Montgomery Advertiser

Military installations and National Guard units across Alabama immediately enacted the strictest security measures and operated under "Force Protection Condition Delta" following Tuesday's terrorist attacks in New York City and Washington, D.C.

Armed Air Force security guards wearing camouflage uniforms with black berets searched cars driving into two entrances of the Maxwell-Gunter Air Force Base's Gunter Annex Tuesday after the terrorist attacks.

After waiting in a two-block long line, drivers popped the latches on hoods and trunks of their vehicles and then stood aside. The military guards checked

cars, but did not search the drivers. The same steps were taken at Maxwell's entry points.

A sign at the entrance to the back gate on Dalrada Road said, "100 percent ID check in progress."

The only concession to the broiling sunshine came when a security van brought the guards bottles of cold water.

Arlene Jackson of Montgomery, a civilian who works at Gunter Annex, called the day's events "horrible."

Deborah Green, who works at the commissary at Gunter Annex, agreed that the terror attacks were terrible.

"Nobody was prepared for this," Green said. "But the most powerful country in the world should be able to handle anything that comes our way."

Both Green and Jackson said they did not mind the heightened security measures at the Gunter Annex gate.

"Whatever it takes to keep the peace," Green said. Flak-jacketed guards were doing similar checks as a shorter line of vehicles waited to enter the base from Congressman W.L. Dickinson Drive.

Down the drive, camouflaged and helmeted troops lined up 34 trucks, trailers and vans in front of Alabama National Guard headquarters.

Lt. Col. Bob Horton, a spokesman for the Alabama Army National Guard, said Gov. Don Siegelman ordered an "increased state of alert in response to the two planes crashing into the World Trade Center and the incident at the Pentagon."

TERROR HITS HOME

"We continue to live our lives to the fullest, we continue to be proud San Antonians and proud Americans."

SAN ANTONIO MAYOR ED GARZA

Recovering from terror attacks

Local malls are quiet, while small flags are given out and some people want to enlist.

BY ROY BRAGG
EXPRESS-NEWS STAFF WRITER

San Antonio residents, still in shock after the attack on America, ventured out Wednesday in an attempt to get on with their lives.

But it's still tough.

"It's not normal," Maria Cisneros, a Rolling Oaks Mall merchant, said of the clientele who wandered into the stores. "You can see it in their eyes. Their faces are so sad."

All over town, residents struggled to recover.

Sporting grim faces and troubled glares, some put up signs for support. Others set up relief funds in their neighborhoods. A few checked with local military recruiters.

Still others went to modern America's town square, the nearest shopping mall, to put some distance between themselves and around-the-clock reports of carnage and misery.

"It's pretty dull here today," Gail Ramsey said, surveying the empty corridors of Rolling Oaks. "My friends and I came here just to get out of the house."

"I sat on the sofa all day yesterday," added Eileen Peek, who was with Ramsey. "I couldn't make myself do anything. But it's important to get out and move on."

Cisneros, staffing the Rhema Jewelry and Gifts kiosk at Rolling Oaks, said there was an obvious dip in mall attendance. Even mall walkers — folks

who pace the mall corridors for exercise — were largely absent.

One of the few walkers at Rolling Oaks on Wednesday, David Cannon, could see the drop in mall attendance.

"Life has to get back to normal," he said, explaining his presence. "As difficult as it is, it is important that we return to the normal things we do, with obvious respect to the victims who lost their lives."

At Windsor Park Mall, Irma Cavazos, who operates the carousel in the center of the mall, said she could sense the sadness in the few customers who showed up.

"Usually, they're here and they're happy," she said. "Not today. Today, they don't even want to make eye contact with anyone."

While some shopped, others said it with signs.

At a brake repair shop in the Medical Center area, a hand-painted message adorned a window: "Pray for our leaders."

Elsewhere around town, marquees bore messages such as "God Bless America" or "United We Stand."

At Dixie Flag, Lenda Grimes was handing out tiny U.S. flags to anyone who stopped by the company's offices near downtown.

The firm has passed out 10,000 hand-held flags, said Jennifer Alonzo, a company official. When those were gone, the company began passing out U.S. flag decals. There were 5,000 of those distributed, and, at the close of busi-

ness Wednesday, about 4,000 were left. During the Persian Gulf War, the company handed out yellow ribbons.

For Grimes, handing out the flags had added significance.

Her sister, Dianne Self, is a government employee who works in northern Virginia but who happens to have meetings twice a week at the Pentagon.

Had Self not been attending a seminar in San Antonio on Tuesday night, she would have been at the Pentagon about the time American Airlines Flight 77 destined to fly from Dulles Airport in Virginia to Los Angeles slammed into the country's defense

center.

Because of the state of world affairs, suspicion has turned to Islamic terrorists as the parties responsible for Tuesday's slaughter.

Muhammad Choudary, president of the Islamic Center of San Antonio, said San Antonio's Muslim community is keeping a low profile in the aftermath of Tuesday's terrorist attacks.

"We're doing this on our own, but we've met with the police, and they have recommended the same thing and have been very cooperative."

Other than a handful of phone calls, there have been no harassment inci-



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BOB OWEN/STAFF

State Sen. Frank Madla holds hands Wednesday with state Rep. Robert Puente during a prayer at a luncheon held at the Plaza Hotel.

dents locally.

On the other side of the dispute, the United Jewish Communities has opened the UJC Emergency Relief Fund to assist in the recovery, relief and rehabilitation of the victims of this tragedy and their families, said Judy Lackritz, Community Relations Director for the Jewish Federation of San Antonio, which is spearheading the effort.

From postal carriers to federal prosecutors, government was back in business Wednesday. Workers returned to the federal building at 727 E. Durango Blvd., after they were forced to evacuate Tuesday morning due to a bomb threat.

The federal courthouse, which was all but deserted Tuesday after government workers were dismissed early, also was up and running Wednesday.

San Antonio Mayor Ed Garza thanked residents Wednesday for "all the efforts we've pulled together in the past 24 hours."

Speaking to the South San Antonio Chamber of Commerce, Garza urged San Antonians to keep up the good work.

"We continue to live our lives to the fullest, we continue to be proud San Antonians and proud Americans," he said.

The only gap in city business was the absence of councilwoman Toni Moorhouse, who remains in Calgary, Canada, unable to fly home from the Tri-Lateral Summit.

Not everyone could let go of news reports.

Echoing other historical events of the last 70 years — the attack on Pearl Harbor, the death of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, the accident that claimed the life of Diana, the Princess of Wales — newspaper sales were brisk.

The Barnes & Noble Booksellers store at Huebner Oaks sold out of national, state and local newspapers within the first five minutes of opening its doors. Customers at Borders Books Music & Café at the Alamo Quarry Market Shopping Center weren't as lucky. Bundles of newspapers left outside the store were stolen, said general manager Annie Lloyd.

The San Antonio Express-News, which put out a special edition Tuesday, had to have an extra press run Wednesday because of increased street sales, said circulation director Paul Allison.

Street sales of the Express-News on an average Wednesday are about 33,000. On Wednesday, street sales totaled 98,000, Allison said.

Meanwhile, the disaster hadn't sparked long lines at recruiting centers, officials said, as Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor did at the outset of World War II, but it prompted a 223 percent increase in the number of hits on the Air Force's Web site for recruiting, www.airforce.com

All four services' recruiting commands said telephone calls and drop-in visits were up at stations here and around the country, with many offering their support and former veterans asking how to re-join the military.

* For many people, recruiting stations are the only link communities have with the military, which may explain the spike in calls and visits, said Air Force Maj. Terry L. Bowman.

Recruiting stations are "the Farm Bureau office of middle America," said Bowman, the Air Force Recruiting Service's chief spokesman.

"I think the feeling is people want to do something," Cheri Avigne, chief of advertising and public affairs for the Army's 5th Recruiting Brigade at Fort Sam, which oversees recruiting battalions in eight states.

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Staff Writers Daryl Bell, Sig Christenson, Sonja Garza, Sherry Sylvester, J. Michael Parker, and Ed Tijerina contributed to this report.



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TOM REEL/STAFF

Rachel McMurphy waits in line at the Dixie Flag Co. to buy dozens of U.S. flags to hand out to business clients. The flag maker handed out 10,000 tiny U.S. flags for no charge to people who stopped by.



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